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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/083,711	02/26/2002	Gregory G. Brucker	S63.2-10306	3951
490	7590	11/09/2004	EXAMINER	
VIDAS, ARRETT & STEINKRAUS, P.A. 6109 BLUE CIRCLE DRIVE SUITE 2000 MINNETONKA, MN 55343-9185			WEBB, SARAH K	
			ART UNIT	PAPER NUMBER
			3731	

DATE MAILED: 11/09/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/083,711

Applicant(s)

BRUCKER ET AL.

Examiner

Sarah K Webb

Art Unit

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☒ Responsive to communication(s) filed on 20 September 2004.
- 2a) ☒ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☐ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-39, 41 and 42 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) 1-31 and 42 is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 32-39 and 41 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) _____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) _____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☐ The drawing(s) filed on _____ is/are: a) ☐ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
1. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date _____
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: _____

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Objections

1. Claim 32 is objected to because of the following informalities: the status label should be "currently amended" instead of "previously presented." Appropriate correction is required.

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 102

The following is a quotation of the appropriate paragraphs of 35 U.S.C. 102 that form the basis for the rejections under this section made in this Office action:

(b) the invention was patented or described in a printed publication in this or a foreign country or in public use or on sale in this country, more than one year prior to the date of application for patent in the United States.

2. Claim 32 – 38 and 41 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 102(b) as being anticipated by US Patent No. 5,972,017 to Berg et al.

Figure 9 illustrates a bifurcated stent with a first section (14), a second section (12), and *at least four* linkage members (22a). Berg explains that the linkage members (22) are integral with both the first and second sections (column 5, lines 10-15 and column 6, lines 15-31). The stent can be formed of shape memory metal, as Berg lists "nitinol" as a material for construction (column 4, line 39). Regarding claim 36, the linkage members (22) meet the broad limitation of "*substantially S-shaped*." As shown in bold, the linkage member (22a) has many curves that can be considered "S-shaped." Regarding claim 41, there are at least eight linkage members (22), as some members (22) are located on the side of the stent that is not illustrated.

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Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

3. Claim 39 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Berg et al. in view of US Patent No. 6,071,298 to Lashinski et al.

Berg includes all the limitations of claim 39, except for selectively annealing the links of the stent. As shown in Figures 3 and 7 especially, the linkage members of The Berg stent must be highly flexible to allow such a collapsed delivery configuration. Lashinski teaches that stent sections requiring greater flexibility can be selectively annealed (column 4, lines 5-60). It would have been obvious to one of ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to selectively anneal the links of the stent of Berg, as taught by Lashinski, as this provides the links with greater flexibility.

Response to Arguments

4. Applicant's arguments with respect to claims 32-39 and 41 have been considered but are moot in view of the new ground(s) of rejection.

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Sarah K Webb whose telephone number is (571) 272-4706. The examiner can normally be reached on Mon-Fri 8-4:30.


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If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anhthuan T. Nguyen can be reached on (571) 272-4963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 703-872-9306.

Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free).

SKW
11/03/04

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DAVID O. REIP
PRIMARY EXAMINER